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SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

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*Schlesinger* *Good*  
*W. H. A. K.*  
*If that's high*  
*wait to the*  
*next one ....*

HOWLAND EVANS and ROBERT NOVAK

## Growing Concern About Kissinger

Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's assurances to European diplomats here that the Arab summit in Rabat last month would follow his grand design came in the face of oblique but persistent intelligence warnings that a disaster might be in the making.

One corroborating indication was the repeated pledge of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat that the Rabat conference would not undermine Jordan's King Hussein and hence Kissinger's salami tactics in pressing intransigent Israel to make successive small withdrawals from Arab land seized in 1967. That policy went bankrupt the moment Hussein lost his authority to negotiate with Israel on the West Bank.

Kissinger flatly informed the Western European allies of the United States from Washington on Middle East policy—that Sadat had given him a "pledge" on the outcome of the fatal Arab summit in Rabat to deliver on that pledge. It now being widely but privately cited as one more piece of evidence that Kissinger is over-extended in singlehandedly conducting every aspect of American foreign policy.

The cataclysmic setback for the United States resulting from the Arab decision to bypass Hussein and designate Yasser Arafat as Israel's bargaining partner on the Israeli-occupied West Bank of the Jordan is a showcase example.

Despite the veiled intelligence warnings that the Rabat meeting might not come out roses for the United States,

the State Department never conducted a single, serious, advance appraisal of the political forces arrayed against Sadat. Middle-level experts at State never attempted to analyze whether Sadat could really hold the Kissinger line. No papers were drafted, no discussion was that middle-level diplomats do not know what Kissinger himself knows, or one-quarter of it, about their own areas of responsibility. Many U.S. ambassadors find themselves in the same boat. Since they are not privy to Kissinger's private talks with heads of state, they are not equipped to make serious estimates based on their own foreign sources.

U.S. diplomats who regularly tap opinion at the United Nations, for example, Arafat hard line that came thundering out of Rabat. But since U.S. policy toward Rabat was being handled secretly, the opinion of middle-level State Department officials seemed superfluous.

A different and less serious crisis of diplomacy stemming from Kissinger's monolithic grip on policy was the inability of the U.S. delegation to the World Food Conference to define the administration's anti-famine plan before Kissinger touched down at Rome to announce it—in his speech. Indeed, Secretary of Agriculture Earl Butz was so angered at what he regarded as being upstaged by Kissinger that his wife boycotted Kissinger's speech and went shopping.

"There were 20 congressmen in Rome for that conference," one U.S. official told us, "but they had no idea what our policy would be because Henry was traveling in Asia." The Kissinger speech was extremely well-received by the congressmen, but as soon as U.S. farmers and the game plan changed.

With Richard Nixon in the White House, centralization of foreign policy worked well, sometimes miraculously. But that has changed. When Kissinger returned from his long trip to Asia, Europe and the Middle East, he had to plunge into double-digit hours of Oval Office cram talks to prepare an untutored President Ford for Japan, South Korea and Vladivostok. He sandwiched cago on how the oil-consuming nations could escape bankruptcy.

Senior and junior officials who watched the umphs with some envy now watch the Kissinger setbacks with a mixture of alarm and anger. They are alarmed because they fear Kissinger has too much influence with a President lacking strong foreign policy convictions of his own or an independent national security staff in the White House. They are angry because they think the Secretary of State, strong man of a weak cabinet, has become too much a one-man show, without a President or a bureaucracy capable of double-checking his decisions.

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